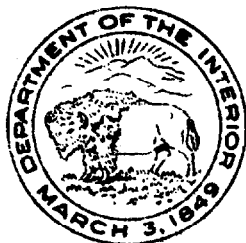


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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release APRIL 25, 1956

FIRST PROPOSED UNITED STATES VOLUNTARY STANDARD FOR FISHERY PRODUCTS ANNOUNCED

As the result of cooperative efforts by the fishing industry, the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Agriculture, quality standards that have proved so valuable as a marketing aid for agricultural products will soon become available for fish and fishery products, John L. Farley, Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, announced today.

An official notice of proposed rule making for United States standards for frozen fried fish sticks will be published in the Federal Register of April 26, 1956.

Funds made available by Public Law 466, 83d Congress, commonly referred to as the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act, have been used to expedite the program of the Fish and Wildlife Service for the development of voluntary Federal standards. Frozen, fried fish sticks were selected as the product of highest priority by the fishing industry. A committee of industry technologists, representative of fish stick producers and distributors, actively cooperated with the Service scientific staff in the studies of the product and of the processing procedures required to insure the development of a realistic and practical standard.

Also now in process of development are proposed standards for fish blocks (the raw material from which many fish sticks are prepared), and frozen raw breaded shrimp.

In order to fully utilize the existing facilities and personnel within the Federal Government, the Department of the Interior has joined with the Department of Agriculture to develop, establish, and implement the standardization program for fish and fishery products. The Department of the Interior will conduct all research, conferences, and meetings required to develop or revise standards. The standards will then be transmitted to the Department of Agriculture with the recommendation that it promulgate them. When they become effective, the Department of Agriculture will offer an inspection and certification service on a fee basis upon request by any financially interested party. Such inspections would aid in quality controls and in facilitating the marketing of the product.

The proposed standard for frozen fried fish sticks applies to whole rectangular-shaped portions of fish flesh, breaded, precooked, and frozen. It is recommended that the "largest dimension" (length) of the sticks be at least three times that of the "next largest dimension" (width), and that the average weight of the individual sticks be not less than $3/4$ ounce and not greater than $1\frac{1}{4}$ ounces. The grades proposed include "U. S. Grade A" and "U. S. Grade B." Quality below these grades would be classified as "Substandard."

Technical requirements for ascertaining quality include the factors of: flavor and odor; appearance as to size uniformity, color, and coating; defects; such character elements as ease of separation, wholeness, freedom from oiliness or crumbliness in the coating; tenderness and moistness of the flesh, and the consistency and adherence of the coating on the heated product.

The proposal does not define proper labeling nomenclature for this product. Frozen fried fish sticks when sold in interstate commerce are required to conform to the labeling regulations of the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Copies of the proposal will be made available by the Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington 25, D. C., upon written request.

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